REPAIR OF TIMBER-BUILT HOUSES.

AWARDS UNDER METROPOLITAN BUILDINGS ACT.

Mr. Robert Wade, builder, was doing the following repairs to a wooden house in Bailey's Rents, in the district of St. Nicholas, Deptford, and refused to give notice to the district surveyor, Mr. Martyn, viz.:—

Cutting away the decayed quartering, and weather boarding of the external walls, to the height of one foot from the ground, and raising the present brick foundations one foot, to receive and support them at their diminished height; also taking down about four courses of the brickwork of the chimney-stack, and rebuilding and pointing ditto, and setting new chimney-pots thereon; also repairing the external weather boarding, which was in a very bad and rotten state;—and mutually they requested the award of the official referees, as to whether or not the said repairs "come within the jurisdiction of the Act."

The referees awarded (May 28th, 1845):—"That a mere superficial repair, such as pointing, is not within the operation of the said Act, but that a structural repair is within the said Act, and with respect to the building in question, that inasmuch as the works in question involve structural repairs, the same are within the operation of the said Act, and that although the building in question may not have been built according to the present or any previous statute for the regulation of buildings, yet it is the duty of the district surveyor to see that such building is not made more combustible than it may have been hitherto."

Fees of the office, 1*l.* 8*s.* 9*d.*, and 1*l.* 1*s.* to the district surveyor, to be paid by the builder.

In consequence of suggestions made by the referees, and as a sort of appeal against this award, Mr. Francis Edwards, architect (on the part of Mr. W. J. Evelyn, the owner of the house in question and nine others, similar), in conjunction with the district surveyor, submitted the following inquiries:—

William John Evelyn, Esq., proposes to repair ten several timber-built houses covered with deal weatherboarding, situate in Bailey's Rents, in the parish of St. Paul, Deptford, upon which the following questions arising thereout, are proposed to be submitted for the decision of the official referees under the Metropolitan Buildings Act.

1. If the quarters and boarding (forming the "external inclosure") are partly decayed at the bottom, so as to require the brick foundation to be carried up less than one foot in height, is it not a repair permitted by the Act, without requiring a notice to, and supervision of the district surveyor?*

If a notice is requisite, is any fee payable thereon; and if so, what amount?

2. If the said quarters and weather boarding are simply repaired with the same materials, the portion taken out being less than "one-fourth of the whole surface," is any notice to the district surveyor requisite?†

If so, is any fee payable, and what amount?

3. If the chimney tops are taken down three or four courses, and reinstated to the same height, and the common pots reset, is any notice to be given of this, and is any fee to be paid for it, and what amount? There are two chimney-stacks to each house.‡

4. The privies to these houses are built of timber, and weather boarded; cannot they be repaired without a notice, and if so, is any fee paid for it?

If the privy is taken down, cannot it be rebuilt with timber, if detached from the house? and is a notice to be sent to the district surveyor?§

Whether any fee is to be paid for the same, and what amount?

Or, if the privy be rebuilt with brickwork, is it requisite a notice should be sent to the district surveyor; and if so, is any fee to be paid him for the same, and what amount.

On the 21st of August the parties were heard, Mr. Dawson, barrister, appearing for Mr. Evelyn, and Mr. T. Chambers for Mr. Martyr, and on the 13th day of September, the referees made the following award:—

"On the first and second questions, and on the first part of the fourth question—that inasmuch as the Metropolitan Buildings Act requires every district surveyor to cause all the rules and directions of the said Act to be well and truly observed, and inasmuch as the said Act makes provision in schedule D, part 2, with regard to the 'old external walls or other external inclosures of any building already built,' in reference to materials to be used in the repair thereof; and inasmuch as the said Act also requires the builder to give notice to the district surveyor before any matter or thing placed by the said Act under the supervision of the district surveyor shall be done. And inasmuch as the operations supposed in the first and second questions, and in the first part of the fourth question are works within the meaning of the said Act, notice should be given to the district surveyor as provided by the 13th section of the said Act. And inasmuch as a service is required to be performed in respect of such works, the surveyor is entitled to a fee, but as no fee is specifically assigned to such service, the amount payable must be determined by the order and appointment of the official referees, with the consent of the Commissioners of Works and Buildings.

And as to the third question, inasmuch as the operation therein described does not affect the structure of the building on which it may be performed, and is not specifically provided for in the Metropolitan Buildings Act, the said official referees hereby certify, determine, and award, that such operation is not to be deemed a work within the meaning of the said Act.

And as to the second part of the fourth question, the said official referees do hereby further certify, determine, and award, that the rebuilding with timber, of any building not being an insulated building, within the meaning of the said Act, would be contrary to the provisions of the said Act, unless any such building be included in the conditions stated in the modification, as it regards certain small office buildings directed by the order of the Commissioners of Works and Buildings, dated September 5th, 1845.*

And as to the third part of the said fourth question, the said official referees do hereby further certify, determine, and award, that if any building of what nature soever be rebuilt within the limits of the Metropolitan Buildings Act, notice thereof must be given to the district surveyor, and a fee will thereupon become payable according to the rate thereof."

Fees of the office (5*l.* 5*s.* 3*d.*) and 3*l.* 3*s.* to the district surveyor, to be paid by Mr. Edwards.†

* Refer to schedule D. part 2nd, page 782 and 783 "Materials to be used in Repairs," and 13th sect. of the Act.
† Refer as above.
‡ Refer to schedule F. page 788, "Chimney Shafts."
§ Refer to schedule H., page 790 and 791, "Cesspools and Privies."

Correspondence.

STAINED GLASS WINDOW IN ST. JAMES'S CHURCH.

Mr. Editor,—Having read various articles, letters, and paragraphs on this subject, I, as a subscriber to the fund, naturally feel a great interest in the result. It appears evident and conclusive that a very great blunder has been committed, and an act of injustice to the subscribers, as well as to the artists applied to,—to say nothing of the misfortune of providing an eminently bad precedent by the adoption of an unseemly discrepancy.

Your remonstrances have no doubt, mainly contributed to the arrest of its progress, and this is gratifying; but as in your last you state that you "learn the committee have sent especial instructions to Mr. Wailes, that he is to take out of his design every thing that is Gothic," *which is impossible withoutentire obliteration*, it must, I think, be a clear admission on the part of the committee that they have (even though inadvertently) committed an act of great injustice to all the parties concerned.

As you, Sir, remark "they know they are in error, yet fear to retrace their steps." It seems clear that in *honour* and *justice*, the committee ought to recal all the designs (allowing the person who has been so untowardly chosen to produce another). This, it seems to me, would get the committee out of a dilemma, in which they have inadvertently placed themselves; would be more honourable to them than to persist in an error, and more just to the subscribers and to the public. Those who have the care of public works are deeply responsible, as their example becomes a bad or good precedent in future works.—I am, Sir, &c.,

Sept. 20, 1845. A Non-Parishioner.

* See Builder, p. 446, *ante*.
† We repeat our suggestion, that parties finding awards reported by us applicable to their own cases, should consult the whole of the papers connected with them, at the Registrar's office. They will find Mr. Newall, the keeper of the papers, attentive and obliging.

STEAM FROM THE COMBUSTION OF GAS.

Sir,—In answer to a question by "A Shopkeeper" in your last number, I beg to state, coal-gas, which is composed of carbon and hydrogen, is during its combustion, by its union with the oxygen of the air, resolved into carbonic acid and water (the carbon and oxygen forming carbonic acid, and the hydrogen and oxygen water); which water, owing to the temperature of its formation, exists as vapour or steam. This coming in contact with the cold glass of your correspondent's window, is condensed, and the only remedy appears to be, to remove the gas lamp farther from the window, its close proximity causing the steam to be condensed instead of being dissipated about the room as in ordinary cases.

I am, Sir, &c. J. G. S.

"H. B." (an architect) recommends the adoption of "Rutter's Light," brought out by Platow and Co., Holborn: the products of the consumed gas are, therein allowed to escape through a tube. "A Bowness" (7, Little Britain), offers to examine and rectify the nuisance complained of.

IMPROVED SASHES.

Sir,—I have made a sash frame and sashes, in appearance the same as those now used, but, by a simple contrivance, the sashes can be removed from the frame and replaced in five minutes, by any servant, man or woman, after once seeing it done. My object in contriving it is, to obviate the danger arising from servants sitting outside to clean the windows, likewise glaziers raising ladders, and sitting outside to repair windows and paint them. Now, Sir, I am at a loss to know in what way I may benefit myself by the contrivance. It would not pay any person in this town to take out a patent for it, neither do I think that it would be of any advantage for me to register it. I think that it would pay any large sash-frame maker in London to register it; any information will be thankfully received by a constant reader.

September 29. A. J.

Any communication will be promptly attended to by addressing a paid letter to A. J., Post-office, Hanover-street, Portsea, Hants.

*** We insert the above with the view of aiding the writer.

Miscellanea.

The Orders of the Royal Commission.—The results of the late exhibition, as regards the orders given to the competitors, do not seem to have been rightly understood. Mr. Dyce is to execute his cartoon of "The Baptism of Ethelbert" in fresco, in the centre compartment of the House of Lords, over the throne; the commissioners desire to see one fresco done, that they may rightly judge of the effect; but they have guaranteed to Messrs. Maclise, Horsley, and Cope, that these gentlemen shall execute their several subjects (with such revisions as they may consider expedient), *in the event of fresco painting being decided on*, after the completion of the work by Mr. Dyce. It is also open to the two other artists—Mr. Redgrave and Mr. Thomas—to revise their designs; at least it is so understood; for no other artists, treating the same subjects, have been preferred to them. With respect to the other works, Messrs. Horsley, Cope, Herbert, Severn, and Tenniel are commissioned to execute five frescoes in a hall where it is proposed to place statues of the poets—each artist having to select a subject to illustrate the poet who may be allotted to him. Six of the poets are Chaucer, Spencer, Shakspere, Milton, Dryden, and Pope; there are to be other two, but they are not yet determined upon. The compartments in the Poet's Hall are 8 feet high by 5 feet 7 inches wide. Mr. Maclise was offered a compartment in the Poet's Hall, but he declined the commission, being desirous of completing his fresco in the House of Lords—for which he reserves himself.—*Art-Union*.

To learn how to use PDF Compression and OCR go to ThePaperlessOffice.org